

Advertising workshops:

Saints or Scoundrels?

MDC's advertising workshops, attended by dealers, managers, salespeople, advertising media and industry associates, are off to a rousing start. Comments range from the sublime to the ridiculous: from those who suggest the workshops should be mandatory, because only conscientious people attend voluntarily, to defiant ones who blatantly advise, "I'm here only to learn what I can get away with!"

Advertising Guidelines sent to all licensed dealers at the end of November and posted to the MDC web site strive to eliminate the confusion resulting from various pieces of legislation, regulations and standards - all of which have been in place for some time. Now it's in one consolidated package. While the focus of the workshops is advertising, the interactive agenda evolves from the participants, and invariably becomes a lively exchange about practices and standards within our industry.

MDC has already seen a noted improvement in dealer advertising, but there are many who appear to be ignoring all efforts at reform. MDC investigators have issued a number of warning letters. Continued non-compliance will lead to escalated enforcement actions by investigators and eventually hearings with the Registrar.

Common items of concern that continue to appear in ads include: incomplete information being provided about financing and leasing; failure to ensure that the "total price" is clearly and prominently provided for all vehicles advertised; misleading and incomplete vehicle details including failure to provide vehicle stock numbers.

Don't use the MDC or the MDSA logo!

Some dealers have been including the MDC or MDSA logo in their advertising to show support for the Council and/or to build consumer confidence. Please note that the use of the MDC logo is not authorized for any dealer or salesperson in any form of advertising, printed materials or on web sites. Also, the voluntary Motor Dealer Standards Association (MDSA), which was dissolved in June, 2004, after the MDC was created, no longer exists so the use of its logo - a stylized license plate - is no longer permitted. Those using either of these logos should cease and desist.

Book now! - workshops sell out fast!

Visit the MDC web site for details about the advertising workshops and a registration form. The President and Registrar, Ken Smith, attends them all. Cost for the all-day session including morning pastries, lunch, beverages and an extensive workbook, is \$140. Those currently scheduled with space still available are: Langley (February 23); Richmond (March 10); and, Smithers (April 25). If you are interested in attending a subsequent workshop or to have one scheduled in your area, contact our office to get on the waiting list. The best way is to e-mail us at training@mdcbc.com